

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A starting device (100) for at least one internal combustion engine, in particular a pull-rope type starting device for at least one two-stroke or four-stroke motor, which comprises at least one pulley or rope drum (4) which is rotatably held in at least one housing (1), wherein said starting device, for generating the drive torque for ~~the~~a motor shaft by means of at least one handle (10), in particular by means of at least one starter handle or pull handle, is rotatable by way of at least one load transfer means (9), in particular by way of at least one starter rope or pull-rope, and by way of at least one elastic coupling element (6), in particular by way of at least one spiral spring, is connected to at least one engaging element (5), in particular to at least one ratchet-type engaging element, by means of which the drive torque can be transmitted to the motor shaft,

characterised in that

in a gap between

- the pulley or rope drum (4), in particular between ~~the~~an axle of the pulley or rope drum (4), and
- the coupling element (6) or the engaging element (5), in particular ~~the~~an axle of the engaging element (5),

at least one bushing or sleeve (8), in particular a thin-walled bushing or sleeve (8), is provided, by means of which this gap can at least partly be filled.

2. (Previously Amended) The starting device according to claim 1, characterised in that the bushing or sleeve (8)

- is guided so as to be torsionally rigid on the axle of the pulley or rope drum (4); and/or
- has play in relation to the axle of the engaging element (5).

3. (Currently Amended) The starting device according to claim 1, characterised in that the bushing or sleeve (8)

- is in the shape of a hollow cylinder; and
- can be put over ~~the two opposite ends of the shafts, in particular of the a drum shaft or opposite ends of the motor shaft,~~ so that the coupling element (6) does not become deformed.

4. (Currently Amended) The starting device according to claim 3, characterised in that the bushing or sleeve (8) essentially extends along ~~the an~~ entire length of the coupling element (6).

5. (Previously Amended) The starting device according to claim 1, characterised in that when the starting device (100) is activated, in particular when the handle (10) is pulled, the coupling element (6) places itself around the bushing or sleeve (8).

6. (Previously Amended) The starting device according to claim 1, characterised in that the bushing or sleeve (8) is made from metal, in particular from hardened metal.

7. (Previously Amended) The starting device according to claim 1, characterised in that the gap

- between the pulley or rope drum (4), in particular between the axle of the pulley or rope drum (4), and the coupling element (6) and
 - between the pulley or rope drum (4), in particular the axle of the pulley or rope drum (4), and the engaging element (5), in particular the axle of the engaging element (5)
- is in the shape of at least one design-related gap or in the shape of at least one design-related separation joint.

8. (Previously Amended) The starting device according to claim 1, characterised in that the coupling element (6) is pretensioned.

9. (Cancelled)

10. (Previously Amended) An internal combustion engine, in particular a two-stroke or four-stroke motor, characterised by at least one starting device (100) according to claim 1.

11. (Currently Amended) ~~A work tool, in particular a portable hand tool powered by an internal combustion engine, such as for example a brush cutter, a chainsaw, a motor saw, an abrasive cutting-off machine or the like,~~ characterised by at least one internal combustion engine according to claim 10, which internal combustion engine comprises at least one starting device (100) equipped according to claim 1.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) A pull-rope starting device (100) for an internal combustion engine, which comprises a rope drum (4) which is rotatably held in a housing (1), wherein said starting device, for generating the drive torque for ~~the~~a motor shaft by means of at least one starter handle (10) is rotatable by way of a load transfer means (9) and by way of an elastic coupling element comprising a spiral spring, is connected to a ratchet-type engaging element (5) by means of which the drive torque can be transmitted to the motor shaft,

characterised in that

in a gap between

- the rope drum (4), in particular between ~~the~~an axle of the rope drum (4), and
- the coupling element (6) or the engaging element (5), in particular ~~the~~an axle of the engaging element (5),

at least one thin-walled bushing or sleeve (8) is provided, by means of which this gap can at least partly be filled, and characterised in that the bushing or sleeve (8)

- is guided so as to be torsionally rigid on the axle of the rope drum (4); and
- has play in relation to the axle of the engaging element (5).

14 (Currently Amended) The starting device according to claim 13, characterised in that the bushing or sleeve (8)

- is in the shape of a hollow cylinder; and
- can be put over ~~the two opposite ends of the shafts, in particular of the a~~ drum shaft or opposite ends of the motor shaft, so that the coupling element (6) does not become deformed.

15. (Currently Amended) The starting device according to claim 13, characterised in that the bushing or sleeve (8) essentially extends along ~~the an~~ entire length of the coupling element (6).

16. (Previously Presented) The starting device according to claim 13, characterised in that when the starting device (100) is activated, in particular when the handle (10) is pulled, the coupling element (6) places itself around the bushing or sleeve (8).

17. (Previously Presented) The starting device according to claim 13, characterised in that the bushing or sleeve (8) is made from metal, in particular from hardened metal.

18. (Currently Amended) The starting device according to claim 13, characterised in that the gap

- between the rope drum (4), in particular between the axle of the rope drum (4), and the coupling element (6) or
- between the rope drum (4), in particular the axle of the ~~pulley or~~ rope drum (4), and the engaging element (5), in particular the axle of the engaging element (5) is in the shape of at least one design-related gap or in the shape of at least one design-related separation joint.

19. (Previously Presented) The starting device according to claim 13, characterised in that the coupling element (6) is pretensioned.